

## Message Text

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USOCOSOUTH FOR CINCSOUTH

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR ADDRESSEE AND CAPTION

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINT, IT, US

SUBJECT: US-ITALIAN MILITARY RELATIONS

REFS: (A) ROME 6174 (EXDIS) DTG 141833Z APR

(B) CINCEUR 041719Z MAY

(C) CINCEUR 281503Z APRIL (NOTAL)

(D) ROME 11053 DTG 091230Z JULY (NOTAL)

1. DOD HAS PROVIDED DEPT FOLLOWING RESPONSE TO CONCERNS  
RAISED REFTELS.

2."IN REF A, AMBASSADOR VOLPE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT  
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INCREASING DISSATISFACTION OF YOUNGER PERSONNEL IN THE

ITALIAN ARMED FORCES, AND SUGGESTED THAT REINVIGORATION OF US-ITALIAN MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS, SUCH AS BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF "BROTHER BRIGADES" OR OTHER UNIT-TO-UNIT RELATIONSHIPS, MIGHT SUPPLEMENT THE EFFORTS OF ITALIAN MILITARY LEADERS TO REVERSE THIS UNFORTUNATE TREND. REF B CONTAINS COMMENTS FROM CINCEUR. THIS MESSAGE REFLECTS COMMENTS BOTH FROM CINCEUR AND SERVICES AND SUGGESTS WAYS IN WHICH EXISTING INTERCHANGE PROGRAMS CAN BE MADE MORE EFFECTIVE OR AUGMENTED THROUGH JOINT ACTION BY EMBASSY, CINCEUR AND US SERVICES.

3. EXISTING PROGRAMS OF INTERCHANGE INCLUDE:

A. REGULAR ITALIAN MILITARY ENROLLMENT IN US SPONSORED SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAMS. FOR INSTANCE, THIRTY-ONE ITALIAN NAVAL PERSONNEL RECEIVED TRAINING IN US NAVAL SCHOOLS UNDER OUR \$1.8 MILLION PROGRAM IN FY 1976.

B. BILLET EXCHANGES. (ONE ITALIAN ARMY OFFICER AND SEVEN ITALIAN NAVAL PERSONNEL ARE SCHEDULED TO SERVE ONE YEAR IN US BILLETS IN FY 1977).

C. SISTER UNITS (TWO USAF SQUADRONS IN FRG REGULARLY EXCHANGE OPERATIONAL VISITS WITH TWO "SISTER SQUADRONS" OF ITALIAN AIR FORCE).

4. IN ADDITION TO THESE SPECIFIC PROGRAMS, US SERVICE ELEMENTS ASSIGNED IN ITALY HAVE AS PART OF THEIR MISSION THE PROMOTION OF POSITIVE RELATIONS WITH HOST NATIONALS, AND SPONSOR NUMEROUS INTER-CULTURAL PROGRAMS IN ITALY, WITH WHICH EMBASSY ROME IS NATURALLY FULLY ACQUAINTED.

5. IN ADDITION TO ESTABLISHING NEW UNIT-TO-UNIT RELATIONSHIPS, FOLLOWING IDEAS FOR SUPPLEMENTING EXISTING PROGRAMS HAVE BEEN EXPRESSED:

A. VISITS BY SMALL GROUPS OF ITALIAN MILITARY TO US BASES/FACILITIES IN THEATER -- CINCEUR HAS PROPOSED INVITING JUNIOR OFFICERS AND NCOS TO VISIT, LIVE WITH, AND PARTICIPATE WITH US UNITS IN EUCOM FOR PERIODS OF ONE TO TWO WEEKS.  
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PERSONNEL WOULD BE INTEGRATED INTO DAILY US UNIT ACTIVITIES.

B. INCREASED OPERATIONAL JOINT TRAINING WITH US SIXTH FLEET AND OTHER US THEATER FORCES.

C. ITALIAN OBSERVERS OR PARTICIPANTS IN BILATERAL US OPERATIONS WITH OTHER ALLIES.

D. INCREASED ITALIAN PARTICIPATION IN NATO EXERCISES.

E. US-ITALIAN AIR EXERCISES AT COLLOCATED OPERATING BASES IN ITALY, WHEN AND IF CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED.

F. INCREASED BILLET EXCHANGES -- US NAVY REPORTS THAT ITALIANS HAVE ONLY BEEN ABLE TO FILL ONE QUARTER OF AVAILABLE EXCHANGE BILLETS FOR FY 1977 DUE TO MANPOWER SHORTAGES. (USN WISHES TO CONTINUE EXCHANGE PROGRAM AND IS SEEKING GREATER ITALIAN PARTICIPATION, BUT MAY NEED TO REVIEW

COMMITMENT IF ITALIANS CANNOT PARTICIPATE AT LEVEL COMMENSURATE WITH US).

6. PRINCIPAL DIFFICULTY WITH ALL ABOVE SUGGESTIONS IS FUNDING. AS NOTED BY CINCEUR, MAP FUNDS ARE NOT PRESENTLY AVAILABLE FOR ITALY; FMS TRAINING COSTS HAVE RISEN FOR ITALY BOTH AS RESULT OF GAO REQUIREMENT THAT DOD MUST RECOUP TOTAL TRAINING COST TO THE US GOVERNMENT AND OF THE PRECIPITOUS DECLINE IN THE EXCHANGE VALUE OF THE LIRA. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE ARE SYMPATHETIC WITH CONCERN REGISTERED BY GENERAL CUCINO TO AMBASSADOR VOLPE (REF D) WHICH PARALLELS SIMILAR EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN FROM OTHER ALLIED GOVERNMENTS. CINCEUR HAS PROPOSED (REFS B AND C) THAT VARIOUS FORMS OF EXCHANGES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED "OPERATIONAL EXCHANGES" FOR BUDGET PURPOSES, AND INTEND TO FOLLOW THIS PRACTICE WHEREVER ADMINISTRATIVELY POSSIBLE. WE ARE STUDYING FURTHER MEASURES TO EASE FINANCIAL BURDEN OF EXCHANGES FOR ITALIANS (E.G., USE OF MORE FAVORABLE EXCHANGE RATES THAN CURRENT OPEN MARKET DOLLAR-LIRE QUOTATIONS), AND WILL ATTEMPT TO GAIN CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT  
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FOR RELIEF MEASURES IN FY 1978 BUDGET, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT JUNE 11 JOINT RESOLUTION EXPRESSING CONCERN FOR MAINTAINING ITALY'S FULL PARTICIPATION IN NATO. WE WILL BE HAPPY TO BRIEF GENERAL CUCINO ON THIS AND OTHER ASPECTS OF MILITARY COOPERATION DURING HIS PROPOSED VISIT IN NOVEMBER.

7. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, WE ARE ALSO CONSIDERING OTHER MEASURES IN OUR DEFENSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ITALY, APART FROM US-ITALIAN EXCHANGES, WHICH WOULD PROMOTE THESE ENDS. AMONG THESE MEASURES ARE:

A. REVIEW OF ITALIAN PROPOSALS FOR MILITARY SALES TO US AND FOR SALES TO THIRD COUNTRIES OF US LICENSED EQUIPMENT.

B. INCREASED TRAINING OF US MILITARY PERSONNEL IN ITALIAN LANGUAGE.

C. ENHANCED ITALIAN CONTACTS WITH OTHER NATO FORCES -- (US ARMY NOTES THAT CANADA, FRG, AND UK HAVE SMALL UNIT-TO-UNIT EXCHANGES WITH US, AND THAT THESE COUNTRIES MIGHT BE ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP SIMILAR PROGRAMS WITH ITALY, EITHER BILATERALLY, IN A MULTILATERAL EUROPEAN CONTEXT, OR THROUGH SHAPE)."

8. IN PRESENTING THESE SUGGESTIONS, DEPARTMENT AND DOD RECOGNIZE THAT SUCH EFFORTS ON OUR PART CAN ONLY BE EFFECTIVE INsofar AS THEY SUPPLEMENT ACTION BY THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT ITSELF TO DEAL WITH THE CAUSES OF DISSATISFACTION

IN THE RANKS OF THE ARMED FORCES. CONTRASTS BETWEEN ARCHAIC ITALIAN PERSONNEL PRACTICES, PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE WITH BETTER CONDITIONS IN US SERVICES MAY ADD TO ITALIAN UNHAPPINESS. FOR THIS REASON, WE BELIEVE IT DESIRABLE TO MAKE A PARALLEL ON-GOING EFFORT TO IMPRESS ITALIAN GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY LEADERS WITH THE NEED FOR REFORMS. ADDRESSEES ARE URGED TO TAKE APPROPRIATE OPPORTUNITIES TO DO SO.

9. WE WOULD WELCOME COMMENTS OF EMBASSY ROME, CINCEUR, AND CINCSOUTH ON THESE ADDITIONAL MEASURES OR ON ANY CONFIDENTIAL

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OTHERS ADDRESSEES MAY WISH TO PROPOSE. ROBINSON

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